

Disabilities Advisory Council (DAC) Meeting
July 29, 2004
Byrd Building
Richmond, Virginia

Members Present: Daaiyah Rashid, James Rothwell, Cheri Stierer, Edward Senft, Elaine Senft, Van Johnson, Edward Zeigler, David Wilber, and Teja Stokes.

Members Absent: C. Michael Savory, Jesse Chapman, Eric Clark, Donald Sublett, Melvin Fenson, Robert Johnson, and Julie Palmer.

Staff Present: Colleen Miller, Sherry Confer, Dee Vance, and Angie Matney.

Call to Order: Daaiyah Rashid, the Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:04 A.M.

Welcome and Introductions: Mrs. Rashid welcomed the Council and everyone present to the Byrd Building, VOPA's office. Following the welcome, Council members, staff and guests introduced themselves to one another.

Public Comment: There was no public comment offered at the meeting.

Minutes: Edward Zeigler made a MOTION to approve the amended minutes with corrections. James Rothwell seconded the MOTION and it carried unanimously.

Guide Dogs Training: Angie Matney, Disabilities Rights Advocate, gave a training on Assistance Dogs. She started her training by distributing disks with the presentation on it and offered to make more copies if Council wanted extra copies. Then she explained the difference between service, therapy and companion animals and followed with examples of the things the dogs could be trained to do. Ms. Matney continued her training by giving a history of the guide dog training program. She then gave some statistics on guide dog teams followed with explanations of how, where and the cost to train assistance dogs. Ms. Matney ended her discussion by explaining how to act when you approach someone with a service animal and she answered questions from Council Members.

Update on VOPA Board Activities: Barbara Barrett attended the meeting and gave the Board Update in place of Maureen Hollowell, VOPA's new Chairman. The Board met on July 19, 2004 and elected a new Chair, Maureen Hollowell and Vice Chair, P. Brent Brown Esq. Hilary Malawer gave a presentation on PABSS and the Ticket to Work Program. The Board is planning a retreat on November 11th and 12th.

VOPA will hold two focus groups, one in Arlington and the other in Roanoke. The purpose of the two focus groups will be to collect information for the priority planning process. Then the priority committee will determine how to use the feedback from the groups.

Finally yet importantly, VOPA passed the MTARS with “flying colors” and was sited for a best practice. A written report of the review will be sent later and it was suggested to VOPA to share the report with legislature.

Lunch:

The meeting adjourned for lunch at 11:45a.m.

Priority Planning Process

The meeting reconvened after lunch at 12:20 p.m. Sherry Confer explained VOPA’s public comment process. Then she gave the council the recommended changes to the Goals and Focus Areas. Following that discussion, Ms. Confer gave an update on the draft calendar. VOPA would implement the DAC’s recommendation, from a previous meeting, and have representatives from different groups come together at one meeting and conduct a focus group. Ms. Miller will conduct the focus group in Roanoke and Ms. Confer will conduct the focus group in Arlington.

After Ms. Confer explanation of the process, Ms. Miller conducted a practice focus group with the Council. After she finished, she asked the Council for feedback on the process and ways to improve the process. Council suggested the following: having leading questions at the beginning of the discussion; creating a feedback form,; obtaining the area of interest at the beginning of the focus group; letting the audience decide which area to discuss; breaking the group into smaller groups and giving them each a focus area to discuss and reporting on it at the end of the allotted time.

Executive Director Update:

Ms. Miller briefly explained the 3rd Quarter Progress Report and VOPA’s Litigation Report. She then explained the purpose of the MTARS visit and VOPA’S history of MTARS visits. Ms. Miller thanked the staff for their hard work in preparing for the visit and she was happy to report that VOPA had no findings on its financial review.

Election of Officers:

After the Director’s update, nominations were taken for the Chairman and Vice Chairman’s office. Mrs. Rashid read the duties of each position from the By-Laws. James Rothwell made a MOTION to nominate Daaiyah Rashid as Chairman and Edward Zeigler as the Vice Chairman. Elaine Senft seconded the MOTION and it carried unanimously.

Other Business:

Edward Senft made a MOTION to accept the new By-Laws for the Disabilities Advisory Council. Van Johnson seconded the MOTION and it carried unanimously.

Next, Mrs. Rashid read a resignation letter from a Council member, Shirley Calhoun, followed with a presentation to James Rothwell for his outstanding service to the Disabilities Advisory Council. James Rothwell’s term will end on July 31, 2004 and VOPA gave him a plaque for his dedicated service throughout his term.

The Council set the calendar for the next year. The meetings are as follows: October 21, 2004, January 27, 2005, April 28, 2005 and July 28, 2005.

Adjournment:

There being no further business before them, Edward Senft made a MOTION to adjourn the meeting. James Rothwell seconded the MOTION and it carried unanimously.

Reviewed by:

Disabilities Advisory Council

Date:

Thursday, October 21, 2004

**Virginia Office for Protection and Advocacy
Mission Statement**

Through zealous and effective advocacy and legal representation, to: protect and advance legal, human, and civil rights of persons with disabilities; combat and prevent abuse, neglect, and discrimination; and promote independence, choice, and self- determination by persons with disabilities.